

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 462
By DeBerry J

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study highway safety and draft a comprehensive highway safety act.

WHEREAS, the safety of this state's system of highways and other routes is of paramount concern to all Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, the rate of traffic accidents, fatalities and injuries on Tennessee highways has been increasing at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS, between 1989 and 1993, traffic fatalities in Tennessee increased by 7.54% and the number of persons injured in traffic accidents increased by 3.94%; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 alone, Tennessee experienced 1,170 traffic fatalities as a result of 1,041 fatal traffic accidents; and

WHEREAS, in that same year, some 76,490 persons were injured in 48,909 personal injury accidents, and property damage accidents totaled 100,985; and

WHEREAS, in the years between 1989 and 1993, an average of 47.3% of all traffic fatalities in Tennessee were alcohol related, and an average of 47% of all fatal crashes were alcohol related; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the abuse of alcohol and other controlled substances, other major contributing factors to traffic accidents are various forms of unsafe and reckless driving, road conditions, and weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, although the aforementioned statistics are indeed appalling, Tennessee's state and local police agencies have done an admirable job of enforcing our laws relative to highway safety; and

WHEREAS, the enforcement of highway safety laws is in and of itself a monumental task, and law enforcement's efforts have been hindered by a statutory scheme that has been enacted and amended in a piecemeal fashion; and

WHEREAS, each year, this General Assembly considers a wide variety of bills relative to highway safety, including legislation on DUI offenses, vehicular manslaughter and vehicular homicide, speed limits, mandated motor vehicle safety equipment, restrictions on certain classifications of drivers and a legion of others; a great deal of this legislation is subsequently enacted; and

WHEREAS, while the goal of such legislation is indeed laudable, to improve highway safety in Tennessee, there has been to date no unifying philosophy or purpose in the consideration and enactment of such legislation; and

WHEREAS, there exists a great need for a comprehensive re-examination of our highway safety laws in order to bring unity and clarity to both the statutory and enforcement aspects of highway safety in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of our highway safety laws should involve concerned parties from all walks of life in order to better represent the public's interest; and

WHEREAS, citizens have a right to feel safe and secure when driving on this state's highways, and this General Assembly should take immediate action to improve highway safety in Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That there is hereby created a special joint committee to study highway safety in Tennessee and to perform a comprehensive examination of highway safety statutes and enforcement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be composed of the following legislative members, to be appointed by the respective speakers:

- (1) one (1) member of the House Education Committee and one (1) member of the Senate Education Committee;
- (2) one (1) member of the House Transportation Committee and one (1) member of the Senate Transportation Committee;
- (3) one (1) member of the House Commerce Committee and one (1) member of the Senate Commerce, Labor and Agriculture Committee;
- (4) one (1) member of the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee and one (1) member of the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee;
- (5) one (1) House member and one (1) Senate member of the Tennessee Black Caucus of State Legislators; and
- (6) one (1) House member and one (1) Senate member of the Select Committee on Children and Youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall also be composed of the following non-legislative members, who shall be appointed by the organization or state agency which they represent, with the approval of the Speaker of the House and the Speaker of the Senate:

- (1) one (1) representative of the American Association of Retired Persons;
- (2) one (1) representative of the National Safety Council;
- (3) one (1) representative of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD);
- (4) one (1) representative of Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD);
- (5) one (1) representative of the Tennessee Parents and Teachers Association;
- (6) one (1) representative of the State Board of Education; and
- (7) one (1) representative of the Department of Safety.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special joint committee shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly, provided that such members are duly elected member of the General Assembly, and shall be paid as members of the General Assembly are

paid for attending legislative meetings as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-1-106.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all non-legislative members of the special joint committee shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for actual travel expenses incurred in attending meetings of the committee in accordance with the state comprehensive travel regulations as promulgated by the Department of Finance and Administration and approved by the Attorney General and Reporter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting, the members thereof shall elect a chair, vice-chair and such other officers as they deem necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundredth General Assembly no later than February 1, 1997, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.